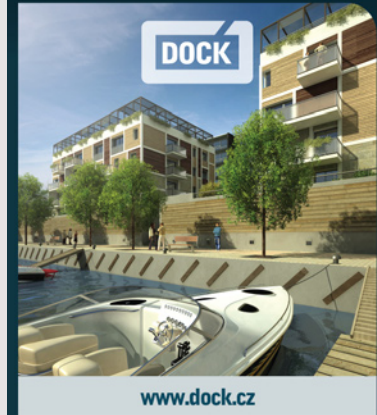# Tunnel algebra

Miroslav Kalousek, as the best post-Communist finance minister of 2008, certainly remembers from his school days how to solve a simple algebraic equation. In case he's forgotten, the Khan Academy provides an excellent tutorial. It shows that you can divide each side of an equation by the coefficient to find the unknown variable. Say you wanted to solve the not-so-imaginary problem of Kč 80bn in higher electricity rates and taxes to be paid by Czech households and businesses. The equation might look like this: 40bn x = 80bn. Easy enough, right? If you were Mr. Kalousek, you could simply divide each side of the equation by Kč 40bn, which is the approximate amount his buddies (Richard Háva and the like) are going to make on the solar subsidy on the one side and the eco-tender on the other. After canceling out the two Kč 40bn amounts, we derive at the solution. The value of x is of course two, and it stands for TWO BIG TUNNEL JOBS. You don't need to be an award-winning finance minister to understand this one.